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MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1913.

#### WHY SWAT THE FLAT?

Thanks to Jack Frost, the season is past, but, as flies, like the poor, are with us always, we give now new proof of the vital need to swat early and often in 1914. This proof is the result of an experiment conducted last summer in New York by the Health Bureau of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Two city blocks in "Little Italy" were investigated—one being protected against flies and one by approved methods of preventive sanitating, the other being left to the course of nature. The two blocks were in the same neighborhood, and represented the same population and conditions. From a census of all the population by ages, and the number of cases of sickness at the beginning of the work and every week for fifteen weeks, the disease record was accurately obtained.

The statistics are as follows: In the unprotected area there were 163 cases of sickness from all causes; in the protected block, only 111. Of cases of noncommunicable disease, there were thirty-six in the protected, forty in the unprotected. The great difference in the total figures, therefore, must be accounted for by the difference in transmissible diseases. Of the cases of germ disease, for which the records are ascertained, the ratio was 12 to 4.

Most striking is the fact that for children under five years, the rate was eighty-two in the protected against 113 for the unprotected. When cases of diarrhoeal trouble are compared, the ratio is 26 to 37, and the number of days of illness averaged 2.5 less in the protected block.

What produced the difference? In one block there was a three-week campaign of education among the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts distributed tracts, and gave tickets for a picture show, where admit prices were reduced to the people to learn. At the expense of the association, screens were put up every door and window on the block, or some 1,700 openings. Large traps were set up by the Boy Scouts, and trap snares sent to every stable in the neighborhood, at an expense of 9 miles a horse per day. The Health Department and Street Cleaning Department gave special attention to the disposal of garbage, cleanliness and general sanitation.

Richmond can learn much from this experiment. Simple cleanliness and prevention cut the sickness of babies down two-thirds. Both economy and humane feeling must approve.

**WEDNESDAY WISE DECISION.**

The announcement published Sunday last Oscar W. Underwood will remain in the Senate as the majority leader of the House of Representatives pending his contest for election to the United States Senate gratifies those who desire a prompt execution of the Democratic programme in that body.

Doubtless the only disappointment at Mr. Underwood's decision will be felt personally by Representative Ritchie and Palmer who aspired to House leadership in the event of his resignation. They realize, however, that the good of the party, as well as of the country at large, best serves by a continuation of the present efficient and energetic administration. Until March 4, 1913, when Mr. Underwood will remain in the House, in case of his re-election he shall not be absent in the United States Senate by Alabama, to be continued in his present post. The Democracy has much important work yet to do before the congressional elections of 1914, and to them could go well advice as Mr. Underwood's wise judgment assembled the association of statesmen, money and ability.

The report from Alabama in that it parts of the state the Jaynes candidacy in being received with enthusiasm. There is generally to be found intelligent exposition of the national service of the state. The honorable Representative Holman, in making a lame stand, but the Roosevelt forces now claim it as their chief objection in securing a new high record in minority service. They assert that the sole significant stand of Mr. Underwood's committee will be the cause of the majority.

It is famous Japanese literary and historical novel in the volume he might have to have trouble in finding it to any of our popular magazines.

What an excellent Christmas present Congress can give the country in the currency bill!

Uncle Andy Carnegie ought to remember the noble English language, when we read, "President See Say Off Europe!" we will know he saw both Barroso and not just the original Savoys.

The death record for deer hunters in Wisconsin this year is twenty-two. Apparently the only safe place is with the deer.

Again, Chapter VIII, entitled "Tyler and Texas," appears to be too largely a history of the Ritchie family and friends—Benton, Blair and Van Buren, of the Albany regency—thought upon subjects, and there is not a single

#### TIME TO FORCE THE CURRENCY REFORM ISSUE.

It is not for the Republicans in Congress and their recalcitrant Democratic backers, nor for the Republicans and the organs of the "big bankers," to criticize the determination of the administration's senatorial supporters to force the issue, and make the currency bill a party question. To that recourse the latter have been driven by the would-be pug or ruin policy of the opposition.

It is true that the Glass-Owen currency bill is a Democratic measure. It was framed in accordance with a pledge to the people in the national Democratic platform, to give the nation banking and currency reform; emancipate business and the masses from the present inadequate, antiquated and speculation-fostering system that has obtained for over half a century, and insure against perversion of banking to special and limited financial interests. In consonance with that pledge, again, it was drafted to the end of currency and credit distribution and sound opportunity, as against conditions conducive to congestion, and offering especial opportunities to those who have access to the currency of the country. However faulty in initial detail, it was in its general propositions of reform and in spirit democratic.

Yet, while all this is true, it is none the less also true that its patrons and the administration opened widely the door for not making the proposed legislation a party of partisans' question. They admitted that in its original form the bill was in many respects tentative, invited discussion, suggestion and compromise, and have accepted numerous amendments.

But the invitation has been taken advantage of by the opposition to delay and to obstruct progress towards decisive action, and so far as possible discredit the workability of the basic principles of the measure by clouding the public mind respecting them. Throughout the policy of the senatorial opposition has been that of my way or none, with the result that an inevitable impasse was reached.

Meantime, business has been depressed, has suffered, not through any lack of confidence in the Democratic party and the administration, or failure to recognize the necessity for banking and currency reform, but because of uncertainty as to when it shall be called upon to adjust itself practically to the change. It had discounted a change in our banking and currency system, just as it discounted tariff revision, in full faith that it would be a healthy change, an essential change, but it has been forced to mark time under the restraint imposed by procrastination.

The regular session of Congress begins today, and there is good reason to believe, in view of the drastic program of procedure which will govern the Senate, that the second pledge of the Democratic party will soon take form of law.

#### PREVENT USELESS SOCIETIES.

The activities of the Spuds—the group of hard-hearted folks who want to prevent useless Christmas giving—suggests the formation of just one more society, to wit, the Society for the Prevention of Useless Societies. We think the new order might begin by exterminating the Spuds for useless giving is one of the finest things in the world, and a society to prevent it is subversive of generous impulse and patriotic worth.

In fact, we are being organized to death. We are lost in a mass of social machinery. From the Republican party to the affiliated Hoboes we have thousands on thousands of societies whose use neither reason nor chivalry can discover. Right here in Richmond there are enough organizations to reform the collective universe, provided two things were true: first, that everybody in the organizations worked the object of the society, and second, that it were possible for mere organization to reform anything or anybody. Neither of these two provisions being humanly possible, the societies get in each other's way, and dissipate fine impulses that should be used for service.

Consider such a worthy idea as that of the Boy Scouts. To begin with, it merely meant that young boys would get together to tramp outdoors and learn how to be prepared against the fortunes of the physical world. All that was needed was a few boys, eagerness and a leader. Yet already we can see signs that the machinery of the Scouts is going to eclipse the real fun. There are too many needs arising. The organization for a good time in a simple way is crowding out the good time. We trust the leaders will see that woodcraft, service and preparedness do not need much organization and that what is most to be desired is a group of boys who can take care of themselves without organization.

The time has come to throw out the challenge: "He that is not for the administration and sincerely for reform is against them" and take unafraid the consequences.

#### BETTER ROADS AND AUTOMOBILES.

Richmond is glad to welcome the annual gathering of the American Automobile Association. We are glad because we can extend hospitality to automobileists from all over the country, and especially because the visit of this convention cannot fail to have a stimulating effect on the good road movement in Virginia. We want the visitors to know that the old State is as virgin unscarred for automobile touring, and one where scenic beauty, historic background and incident property combine to offer attractions we believe cannot be found elsewhere.

Indeed, the only thing that now keeps Virginia from being a paradise for motorists is that the roads are not what they can be made. This gathering of men who know roads from one end of the United States to the other must teach us many things. They can suggest what we need, and how we can secure these needs. They can give us the benefit of experience elsewhere. They can show us what the rest of the nation expects of Virginia, and how the roads of great cross-country highways must be built through Virginia if we are to measure up to our opportunities.

We believe that they will not find Virginia decadent. The spirit of achievement is awake in the old Dominion throughout in the past dozen of years, so much that we are building good roads, for automobiles and for the fundamental means of farm transportation, the public roads with which we intend to link the Virginia part of the Trans-Mississippi Highway in a token of what we can do. Welcome to the meeting, and all with the visions of all that beauty, room can be for Virginia.

Beginning electrically-driven street-cleaning machines very economical, Richmond needs some electrically-driven fire engines.

It is time to call the Congresses of these United States a "continuous race."

The wife of a Toledo parson used violent language, he put his hand over her mouth to stop the flood of abuse, she swallowed her false teeth and choked to death. Even then, he was acquitted of murder.

Hueria seems in the predicament of the man who sawed off the limb between himself and the tree.

How about a Society for the Prevention of Useless Societies?

The wife of a Toledo parson used violent language, he put his hand over her mouth to stop the flood of abuse, she swallowed her false teeth and choked to death. Even then, he was acquitted of murder.

Nothin' makes an ugly fellow as mad as I have somebody shake hands with him an' say, "I ought to remember your face." Some tellers don't let their wives run nothin' but the furnace.—

#### THE EXTRA SESSION ENDS.

The longest continuous extraordinary session of Congress, which practically closed Saturday, did not execute all of the legislative program set before it, but it accomplished as much as could reasonably be expected of it. Legislatures of all classes are slow-moving bodies; they possess a certain inherent inertia which is almost insuperable.

The record of this session is, nevertheless, an uncommonly good one. It put through the project of tariff revision, and on that score alone deserves the commendation of the country. It put into effect the income tax amendment to the Federal Constitution, and although some of the provisions of the measure baffle the most skilled interpreters, the defects can be easily cured. It put into effect the Newlands law for mediation and conciliation in labor disputes, under which effective arbitration of such controversies has already been secured. It abolished the United States Commerce Court, a tribunal whose existence seems never to have been wholly justified nor its jurisdiction clearly defined. It investigated the congressional lobby and exercised a wholesome deterrent influence on the special interests which have been seeking special privilege through lobbyists.

Currency reform is still on the calendar, but it was not to be expected that popular opinion could accelerate its enactment, as was the case with tariff reform. The people of the country, while not understanding specific schedules or interesting themselves in them, had very definite ideas of the object of the Underwood-Simmons measure, and unhesitatingly massed themselves behind it. It was the United States Commerce Court, a tribunal whose existence seems never to have been wholly justified nor its jurisdiction clearly defined. It investigated the congressional lobby and exercised a wholesome deterrent influence on the special interests which have been seeking special privilege through lobbyists.

Skullers Around. Major Rosser captured seventy wagons near the Wilderness Tavern, fifteen miles above Fredericksburg, in the rear of the enemy's line, and destroying fifty, brought on twenty, twelve horses and the same number of prisoners.

Major Mosby and his band came upon rear of Meade's wagon train just before daybreak Friday and captured 112 miles and twenty prisoners. Forty wagons were destroyed between thirty and forty wagons.

Skullers Around. Mrs. Summers, a widow, of Jasper County, Miss., has made during the present year 300 bushels of corn, 100 bushels of potatoes, with peas and beans, and a dozen fatten hams. She did all the plowing herself, and did it with an old wind-broken pony. Her two little daughters, aged twelve and fourteen years, eat the home-grown beans also make 100 pounds of tobacco, now in press. Since her crop was harvested she has done weaving enough to pay for a coat, a pair of cards, and has some money left. Her example is commended to our women.

Skullers Around. Skullers around Richmond. They have been exchanged and ordered to report to their commands, but they are loafing about the capital, some only having their holding places pinned on them.

From the Army of Northern Virginia. Early Saturday information reached Richmond that a severe engagement took place today in the vicinity of Germanna Ford, on the Rappahannock. The enemy had crossed Thursday night and attempted a flank movement of the position of General Lee. The enemy met two miles east of Germanna Ford by General Edward Johnson's Division of General Ewell's Corps, consisting of the First and Second Brigades, commanded by Generals Walker and Jones, and General George H. Stuart's Brigade. A battle ensued for several hours, the rebels with much more than usual stubbornness, but the enemy gave ground, and when dark fell had advanced some miles of the field, which brought them to the entrenched which he had thrown up the night before. Our loss was 200, Captain John Clegg in Hampshire Company, the rebels destroyed within the enemy's stores and captured 245 horses.

Skullers Around. The recent battle General Stuart was slightly wounded, as General Edward Johnson had a horse shot under him.

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